More active people for a healthier world


Virtual meeting, via Teams, 26 February 2024

Meeting Report
1. The World Health Organization held its eighth Dialogue with representatives of sports-related industries virtually, via Teams, on 26 February 2024.

2. The objectives of meeting were to:

   1. Provide brief update reports on the following:
      a. new global estimates on prevalence of physical inactivity in adults, estimated launch date and early planning of communications (data still under review therefore confidential);
      b. draft resolution approved by WHO Executive Board (Jan 2024) and on agenda for World Health Assembly in May 2024 “Strengthening health and wellbeing through sport events” (copy will be circulated)
      c. progress on Phase 2 of the WHO Let’s Be Active register of voluntary commitments towards increasing physical activity;

   2. Discuss two follow-up action areas from 7th Dialogue in Dec 2023:
      a. What data do we need? – A discussion of data gaps (including evidence gaps) related to physical activity agenda from the perspectives of WHO, industry and wider sector for the purpose of strengthening promotion, advocacy, and country action;
      b. Is the sport, exercise and fitness industry being heard and engaged sufficiently in health agenda? Discussion on strengthening industry visibility and engagement with health agenda and WHO GPW14 Promoting health and well-being

3. The programme of the Dialogue is provided in Annex 1 and the list of participants in Annex 2.

SESSION I: WELCOME AND WHO UPDATES

Presentation: Update on WHO activities on WHO’s Global Action Plan on Physical Activity

4. Welcome provided by Dr Ruediger Krech, Director of Health Promotion which included highlighting key areas of discussion from the 7th Dialogue in December 2023 and by Dr Gaudenz Silberschmidt, Director of Health and Multilateral Partnerships who shared an update on the development of the WHO Strategy for Stakeholder Engagement and WHO Private Sector Engagement Strategy as well as brief comments on the work of WHO in sport settings. Dr Fiona Bull, Unit Head of the Physical Activity Unit reiterated the welcome and provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

5. WHO provided an update on work developing new global estimates of levels of physical inactivity in adult populations and forecasted details of the launch of the data between mid-April and mid-May 2024. This will align with a publication The Lancet Global Health providing comprehensive details on methods and results. WHO will also develop a summary document to support wider dissemination of these new data and may convene a global webinar on or around the launch date. Further details on WHO plans and activities will be circulated to all stakeholders who are in turn invited to support by dissemination through channels and networks. It was noted that adolescent estimates are in development with an aim to complete before the end of 2024.
6. Group discussion focussed on potential industry engagement and support in dissemination of results and new data through channels and members. Industry requested advance information on date of launch, press release and WHO main messages in order to prepare and align.

To amplify the dissemination of the estimates, the industry is circulating communications discussing a joint statement. Several large industry meetings are being held soon where critical conversations will be had about the opportunity provided for advocacy.

7. WHO provided a summary on the draft WHO Resolution, “Strengthening Health and Well-Being through Sports Events,” that was passed during the recent WHO Executive Board Meeting in January 2024. It will now be considered at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2024. The primary agenda of the resolution invites all countries to strengthen the use of sport and sport events to promote health, including through promoting physical activity, and addressing all risk factors of non-communicable disease. Notable aspects include the call to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of interventions and development of the evidence of effectiveness as well as increased use of national and international health days to promote physical activity. It was noted the resolution will be made available along with other WHA documents in coming weeks.

8. Discussion highlighted the following points a) high level of engagement from countries in the technical work associated with the resolution b) Concern that too much focus on “sport events” can distract community and political actions, noting the focus on spectating and high-level competition. d) Comments included that sport events may not be the best place to focus efforts to promote physical activity to the least active, and e) The benefits of sport events include reaching large numbers of people and providing information and motivation as well as signposting opportunities to engage in sport and PA was recognised but requires appropriate interventions in pre-and post-event activities to increase participation.

9. WHO provided an update on progress in developing Phase II of the WHO Let’s Be Active Register - a mechanism for non-State actors (including private sector) to submit commitments (or “pledges”) aligned to supporting increasing global levels of physical activity. WHO advised that Phase II documents would be ready for circulation and invited attendees to further discussions within their industry about engagement in this initiative. Phase II is a “demonstration phase” and WHO will invite 3-4 commitments to pilot the scheme before wider engagement across the private sector, philanthropies and civil society.

10. Discussion highlighted there was some flexibility within Phase II re timelines although it is time sensitive to commence Phase II given the delays due to COVID. Delegates were invited to respond to the forthcoming information and indicate their interest and readiness to support the initiative.

11. WHO Department of External Relations provided an update reporting that the draft WHO Private Sector Engagement Strategies and the WHO Stakeholder Engagement Strategy are still under internal review, therefore there is no additional information is available at this time.
SESSION II: INDUSTRY UPDATES

12. World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI)

The representative of WFSGI provided updates a) a new full time position created focused on physical activity promotion b) new three-year strategy includes efforts to assess industry contribution to PA and sport and build advocacy c) new publications—annual magazine with joint article with WHO and McKinsey report noting changes impacting industry d) Business at the OECD Health Forum resulted in recommendations published in January—the documents referred to were emailed during the meeting to participants. e) Engaged with WHO on the positioning of physical activity in the GPW14 f) convening the physical activity committee on 22 April, and g) cycling efforts within WFSGI is evolving from technical to be holistic and include physical activity, ESG, and trade work.

13. Discussion included mention of Path Less Traveled held by ITDP following COP on walking and cycling infrastructure.

14. International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA)

The representative of IHRSA shared a) they are currently preparing for their biggest annual conference b) IRSAH has joined the White House and President’s Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition (http://health.gov/pcsfnas) as part of the Get Active campaign and committed to supporting events to 2030 c) rebranding coming soon.

15. Discussion noted that the U.S.A has the example of unusually high level of leadership from the White House and the President to engage on physical activity. FitIndia was noted as another example of a country with high level visibility of leadership.

16. EuropeActive-THiNKActive

The representatives for Europe Active, shared that Europe Active a) is working through the European data hub to develop a social investment model, based on the model from Sport England b) will be launching a report at industry meeting in April and will share c) has initiated an international economic modeling effort and work is ongoing d) recently started the Healthy Lifestyle for Europe project, with the European Association of Sporting Goods Industries e) the third meeting of the European Physical Activity Taskforce will be held on 9-10 March, focused on surveillance and progress on other areas, and f) will hold the Exercise for Health Summit late November in Bologna, Italy, dates to be finalized.

17. Discussion considered that perhaps the adolescent prevalence estimates will be available by the summit.

18. World Active

The representative for World Active, shared that World Active a) appreciate support from EuropeActive b) are trying to determine where they will be headquartered—currently, Singapore, London and Geneva are possibilities and noted that the delay in this decision is a barrier to sponsorships c) are engaging with IRHSAH to identify joint activities and shared efforts d) will hold their second General Assembly at the Europe Active conference in Cologne, and e) are partnering with UK
Active National Fitness Day and hoping that Australia will launch their national strategy and public health campaign on the same day.

19. Discussion noted that a) the proposed Resolution discussed earlier, calls for strengthening relevant health days to promote physical activity b) the WHO Physical Activity toolkit on communication is still in development and could benefit from case studies. Participants are encouraged to submit relevant work to WHO RUN.

SESSION III: DISCUSSION TOPIC--INDUSTRY VISIBILITY AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE HEALTH AGENDA
20. Open discussion was held with the following key highlights a) Industry shared that ongoing communication is underway including roles and next steps for shared position statement; noting that the launch of the global prevalence estimates will be an opportunity for a rallying cry. b) There are many events this year that could lend to advocacy and communication (and visibility) opportunities including the WHA in May; the Olympics in July-August (they have a focus on bringing more physical activity opportunities to workplaces and schools); Paris Paralympic Games August-September; and ISPAH in November. c) There was general agreement that this is important and slow work with some progress being made. Barriers and examples were discussed. d) It was noted that credibility requires data. e) The Let’s Be Active Register was highlighted as a good opportunity for visibility.

SESSION IV: DISCUSSION TOPIC—WHAT DATA DO WE NEED?
21. Open discussion was held with the following key highlights. It was identified that there is a need for a) Concrete data on the industry’s contribution to physical activity, disaggregated by activity type b) PA participation data on under 10-year-olds including prevalence, experiences, and attitudes c) Evidence on effectiveness of interventions and the economic impact of interventions d) recognition by health care systems of the contributions of sport to health e) Evidence of the lack of risk of engaging in sport and physical activity, and f) Trade standards.

It was noted that a) Barriers to surveillance of children under ten include methodology, funds to develop methodology, ability of young children to answer surveillance questions, capacity of staff working in education and early childcare; b) Wearables may serve a role in motivation and support as well as in measurement, however, consistency and standards in devices will be important for data collection. c) WHO has an agenda on wearables that is underway and aims to resolve some of these barriers. d) Industry can be an advocate for surveillance work through a unified voice, unified funds and engagement. e) New data may require greater commitment. For example, using a global data collection mechanism like Gallup to ask a set of shared-interest questions would be expensive but effective.

SESSION V: MEETING SUMMARY AND ACTIONS
• The Let’s Be Active Register is in Phase II and is ready to accept applications and begin the demonstration period.
• The global prevalence estimates of adult physical inactivity will be launched between mid-April and mid-May and will predict country and global attainment of 2030 goals.
• The Strengthening Health and Well-Being through Sports Events Resolution will be considered at the World Health Assembly in May 2024. It appears to have strong support.
Industry associations are engaged in a variety of work, conferences, and organizational changes individually and are strengthening cross-organization collaboration. They continue to strengthen focus on the promotion of physical activity and increased visibility related to this role and its impact. Additionally, multiple events and activities across 2024 provide stakeholders many opportunities for implementation and alignment of public communications and advocacy activities to promote physical activity agenda and to work together on UN and other health observance days.

Data gaps and needs exist. WHO will continue to provide prevalence data for youth and adults, while exploring how to measure children’s activity levels. Industry participants will consider how to fill data gaps that are needed by industry to attain goals.

WHO will:

- Provide advance notice of upcoming launch of global prevalence estimates date and associated activities such as webinar.
- Circulate documents:
  - The Let’s Be Register information sheet and application materials along with the report for this meeting.
  - The Lancet article and related documents on the global prevalence estimates once they are launched and embargo lifted.
  - WHO will provide the WHO Private Sector Engagement Strategies and the WHO Stakeholder Engagement Strategies once they are finalized.

Additionally, many discussed documents are linked in the report including the WHA site where participants may find the draft Resolution “Strengthening Health and Well-Being through Sports Events” in coming weeks.
Annex 1

PROGRAMME

MORE ACTIVE PEOPLE FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD

The 8th WHO Dialogue with sports-related industries on the implementation of the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA) 2018-2030

Virtual via Teams

26 February 2024

Objectives of the meeting

3. Brief update reports on the following:

   a. new global estimates on prevalence of physical inactivity in adults, estimated launch date and early planning of communications (data still under review therefore confidential);

   b. draft resolution approved by WHO Executive Board (Jan 2024) and on agenda for World Health Assembly in May 2024 “Strengthening health and wellbeing through sport events” (copy will be circulated)

   c. progress on Phase 2 of the WHO Let’s Be Active register of voluntary commitments towards increasing physical activity;

4. Discussion of two follow up action areas from 7th Dialogue in Dec 2023:

   a. What data do we need? – A discussion of data gaps (including evidence gaps) related to physical activity agenda from the perspectives of WHO, industry and
wider sector for the purpose of strengthening promotion, advocacy, and country action;

b. Is the sport, exercise and fitness industry being heard and engaged sufficiently in health agenda? Discussion on strengthening industry visibility and engagement with health agenda and WHO GPW14 Promoting health and well-being

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

9:00 Welcome and Introductions (Chair, Dr Ruediger Krech)
   - Dr Ruediger Krech, Director of Health Promotion,
   - Dr Gaudenz Silberschmidt, Director Health and Multilateral Partnerships, External Relations
   - Dr Fiona Bull, Unit Head Physical Activity
   - Tour de table

Session 1 – Updates from WHO

9:10 (Objective 1a) Update from WHO (Dr Fiona Bull) (≤10 mins)
   - WHO to provide updates on new estimates on PA in adults and timing of launch and potential communications plans

9:20 Discussion. Facilitator TBD.
   - Potential industry dissemination through channels and members.

9:40 (Objective 1b) Update from WHO (Dr Fiona Bull) (≤10 mins)
   - Overview of draft resolution to Strengthen health promotion and wellbeing through sports events

9:50 Q&A / Discussion

10:00 (Objective 1c) Update by Dr Fiona Bull (≤10 mins)
-Let’s Be Active register of voluntary commitments including the timeline, processes, and what to expect

10:10 Q&A and Discussion (Facilitated by Dr Fiona Bull)
- Updates from industry on further planning of potential engagement and commitments following discussion at 7th Dialogue (dec 2024) - from the industry association(s) or from their members to the Let’s Be Active register of voluntary commitments.

10:30 Stretch Break

Session Two – Industry Reports
10:45 Reports from Industry on key developments (≤5 minutes each with short Q&A)
- WFSGI
- IHRSA
- Europe Active
- World Active

11.15 (objective 2a) Discussion Is the sport, exercise and fitness industry being heard and engaged in health agenda? Discussion on strengthening industry visibility and engagement with health agenda and WHO GPW14 Promoting health and well-being

Session Three – Discussion Topic: Data
11:45 (objective 2b) What data do we need?
Reflections and critique of data gaps (including evidence gaps) related to physical activity agenda from the perspectives of WHO, industry and wider sector for the purpose of strengthening promotion, advocacy, and country action;

12:20 Summary and closing remarks

12.30 Close
Annex 3

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

8th WHO Dialogue with sports-related industries

on the implementation of the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA) 2018-2030

Virtual – on Teams

26 February 2024

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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